HOLIDAY RHYMES

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GEORGE TUGWELL,
BATHWICK RECTORY.

HOLIDAY RHYMES

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HG
1894
SELF

BY

ANTHONY C. DEANE

(*Author of "Frivolous Verses."*)



LONDON

HENRY AND CO.

BOUVERIE STREET

1894

Nov: xvi. 97.

6, CATHERINE PLACE,

BATH.

Dear Mr. Tugwell.
Many thanks for your note. I will be at S. Mary's at
11.30 tomorrow.

Yrs. very truly

Arthur C. Benson.

To

MY FATHER AND MOTHER.

NOTE.

OF the verses collected in this volume, the largest instalment is from *Punch*, and is included by the kind permission of Messrs. Bradbury, Agnew, & Co. Others reappear from *Cornhill*, *Temple Bar*, *Longmans'*, the *St. James's Gazette*, the *Globe*, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Westminster Gazette*, the *Granta*, and *Vanity Fair*, through the courtesy of the editors of these periodicals. Also I am indebted to Mr. Andrew Lang for his permission as regards two pieces which received hospitality "At the Sign of the Ship."

A. C. D.

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A BUNDLE OF OLD SERMONS.

THE ink is brown, the paper soiled;
How long ago the writer toiled
Upon these pages!
And as we read their old-world lore,
Their quaint allusions, they restore
The past to us, we live once more
In bygone ages.

Once more to music grave and calm
We hear the "Tate and Brady" psalm,
Which pleased so vastly;

The church and rustic flock grow plain,
The high oak pews, the latticed pane,
We hear the sermon preached again,
From text to "lastly."

No novel views of ancient sense,
No daring flights of eloquence,
Were here embodied;
The placid hearers felt no thrill,
But sat in sleepy comfort still,
While Jack demurely glanced at Jill,
And parents nodded.

Indeed, none listened much, I fear,
To all these periods, painting clear
The saint and sinner,

Until at length there came the close
To stir the drowsy from repose,
And priest and people both arose
And went to dinner.

Ah, sermons of the long ago!
Yours was another age, we know;
And now our preachers,
Each furnished with his special plan
To benefit bewildered man,
Denounce as loudly as they can
Their rival teachers.

Yet, as your pages we retrace
In this our age of cultured grace,
The question lingers

If all of us are happier men
Than those who filled our places when
Your sage designer took the pen
Between his fingers!

AMOR IN EXCELSIS.

WHEN, my Amanda, we are wed next week,
We will not fly to Italy or Spain;
It needs both triple brass and, so to speak,
Quadruple gold, to cross the distant main;
No tourist-haunted places will we seek
By the effete expedient of a train;
An ocean trip—such joys too deeply move:
Amanda, soar with me, and be my love!

No relatives, affectionate and proud,
Shall, with such unction, to ourselves allude;
No *blasé* bachelor shall be allowed
To look with glance significantly rude;
No badly dressed and irritating crowd
Within our own Elysium shall intrude:
But we will leave this earth behind with pleasure;—
Start not; 'tis but a temporary measure.

Nay, fear not that I advocate thus soon
An Ibsenite joint-exit from this life;
'Tis but that I have chartered a balloon
In which ere long, when you become my wife,

We'll visit Mars, or call upon the moon,
Supremely heedless of all human strife.
Two parachutes are thoughtfully provided,
In case it burst or with a star collided.

Then "come with me," Amanda, "be my love;
And we will prove," not that exploded charm
Attributed to flower and tree and dove,
But scientific studies, arm in arm,
Barometers around us, and above
The safety-valve, in case we come to harm.
It is from such aërial employment
That we'll derive the most sincere enjoyment!

RUSTIC ROMANCERS.

["In some rural districts lectures on the methods and aims of novelists have been given with much success."—*Morning Paper.*]

SCENE.—*A farmyard. Eminent novelist discovered lecturing to a crowd of rustics clad in smock-frocks, each with pencil and note-book.*

Lecturer.

NOW, gentlemen all, attend to me, and you
shall receive instruction
Upon the aims and recognised rules of modern
romance-production ;

Don't heed the man who glibly talks of talent
and inspiration,
For each of you will easily gain a novelist's
reputation.

Chorus (eagerly).

We scorn the man of whom yer spoke,
That "genius" is a played-out joke;
Whoy, all of us be cultured folk,
And nuts on the 'Igher Eddication!

Lecturer.

Although the classics are out of date, it's just
as well to be pat in
A Greek tag—leave the accents out—and a
proverb or two in Latin;

It's easily done, and it seems to please the
old and reverend parties;
A stock quotation soothes the mind and gives
the critical heart ease.

Chorus (proudly).

We all 'ave been to the Latin class,
And can decline "*mensæ, mensas,*"
And know the truth of "*Ingenuas*
Didicisse fideliter artes"!

Lecturer.

Then if you've looked in vain for a plot for
all your characters fitted,
You needn't despair; in popular works the plot
is often omitted:

Indeed, sensation's had its day, and scene and
incident thrilling
Are only worthy the crude affair the public
buys for a shilling.

Chorus (aside).

No doubt the worthy gent is right,
We can't say as we 'olds with 'im quite,
We dearly love a murderous fight
With plenty of blood and killing!

Lecturer.

My subsequent hints I must reserve, and treat
in other discourses
Of features you should reckon among the
novelist's best resources:

As how to write in a decadent style with
periods sweet as honey,
And how to be quaintly imbecile without in
the least being funny.

Chorus (enthusiastically).

Ah, these are principles worth a lot,
A fust-class lecturer 'ave we got,
A gentleman, sure, as knows wot's wot—
And he's the man for our money!

[*Dance, and exeunt.*

TO THE MODERN HEROINE.

FORGIVE me if in modern time,
Impelled by obsolete tradition,
I try to paint your charms in rhyme
With (or without) your kind permission,
Although I'm painfully aware
The lover falls to rhyme no longer,
And you would certainly declare
These verses "rot"—or something stronger.

Your recreations now are few
Which seem sufficiently exciting;
You smoke for ever, wield the cue,
And dearly love a little fighting;
You box your lover's ears with glee,
Or smash his crockery, like Dodo,
And act, if *fortiter in re*,
By no means *suaviter in modo*.

A flower not "modest" in your mien
(Though rouge may make you "crimson-tippèd"),
You bloom in every magazine,
Each tale repeats your talk insipid;
In vain for novelty we look,
In vain for some redeeming feature,
From Yellow Book to Yellower Book
You pass, the same distasteful creature.

When ancient poet sought to please,
He would, in metaphors, assert you
Were fickle as the changing seas—
A fault we now should hold a virtue:
Indeed, his epithets surprise;
"*Mutabile*" he called you "*semper*,"
To-day your deadly sameness tries,
And tries effectually, the temper.

So, to conclude, I cannot feign
For such as you much admiration;
Nor shall I grieve what time your reign
Shall reach its fitting termination,
When you, and those like you we know,
Fulfil the destiny you're meant to,
And, wholly unlamented, go—
Where stupid heroines are sent to.

THE LAY OF A SUCCESSFUL ANGLER.

THE dainty artificial fly,
Designed to catch the wily trout,
Full loud *laudabunt alii*,
And I will join, at times, no doubt;
But yet my praise, without pretence,
Is not from great experience.

I talk as well as any one
About the different kinds of tackle:

I praise the Gnat, the Olive Dun,
Discuss the worth of wings and hackle;
I've flies myself of each design—
No book is better filled than mine.

But when I reach the river's side
Alone, for none of these I wish:
No victim to a foolish pride,
My object is to capture fish;
Let me confess, then, since you ask it—
A worm it is which fills my basket!

O brown, unlovely, wriggling worm,
On which with scorn the haughty look!
It is thy fascinating squirm
Which brings the fattest trout to book,
From thee unable to refrain,
Though flies are cast for him in vain.

Deep gratitude to thee I feel,
And then, perhaps, it's chiefly keen,
When rival anglers view my creel,
And straightway turn a jealous green;
And should they ask me, "What's your fly?
"A fancy pattern," I reply.

"AND SO THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER."

THEREWITH the story ends again;
And who is not contented?
The Ogres all are duly slain,
The Dragons circumvented,
The Princess weds the hero bold
Who came her chains to sever,
And so the blissful pair, we're told,
"Live happily for ever."

So—Finis! And the book we close—
No other facts are granted;
But lovers then, we must suppose,
Were never disenchanted:
For them was no domestic strife,
No troubles intervening,
But "happiness" and "married life"
Were synonyms in meaning.

We too, perhaps, although we dwell
In different circumstances,
Perform the drama fairly well
Set forth in these romances:
The Ogre's part a parent plays,
The maid's an heiress pretty,
The Prince, in these prosaic days,
Is "something in the City."

But will the parallel extend
Through after-life, I wonder,
When grave philosophers perpend
That marriage is a blunder?
Ah, chroniclers discreetly mute!
You were, perchance, too clever
To hint at rifts within the lute
Of happiness for ever!

And yet. . . . the view is out of date,
By grave statistics shaken;
But still to some, at any rate,
It does not seem mistaken;
For though the cynic's bitter mirth
No truth in it discovers,
Love now, as then, can make of earth
A paradise for lovers!

TO R. L. S.

["Of course I might have made a living at journalism; but, thank God, I did not fall into that trap." "Journalism is the school of cheap finish. I am a wretched journalist."—MR. R. L. STEVENSON, *to an Interviewer*.]

HE speaks, the master of romance,
Who holds an island in his sway;
He lets a journalist advance
In quite a condescending way,
Although aware that by his side
"Cheap finish" is personified.

But all his brother-scribes he rates
In language forcible and plain;
The editorial net, he states,
For him, thank Heaven! was spread in vain;
And adds—is this the reason's gist?—
"I am a wretched journalist."

He might, "of course," have quickly made
An income of a large amount
By plying that debasing trade
In which—we quote his own account—
The epithet of "wretched" will
Sufficiently describe his skill.

Well then, it's best, you'll surely own,
To write us charming tale and rhymes,

And leave all "interviews" alone
And dull epistles to the *Times*,
Lest others, in their turn, insist:
"You *are* a wretched journalist!"

POETS AT SCHOOL.

[" Lessons in all kinds of composition given. . . . Poetry, light and serious. . . . Terms, from 3*s.* 9*d.* a week."—*Advertisement in Daily Paper.*]

HERE is a chance for all who seek
Apollo's sacred shrine:
Attend our lectures twice a week
At only three-and-nine!
No Miltons now, if they're astute,
Need stay "ingloriously mute."

The heights, of old esteemed sublime,
You'll easily attain;
For crowds to-day Parnassus climb
By cheap excursion train,
And authors find distinctly good
Our nectar, bottled from the wood.

You'll quickly learn within our school
Poetic love to tell,
And study how to make by rule
Ballade and villanelle;
With equal ease you'll turn a sonnet
On evolution or a bonnet.

You'll furnish dramas for the stage,
And epics in between;

Your verse will figure on the page
Of every magazine ;
The critics will your praises speak :
And all for three-and-nine a week !

The notion that the poet's bays
For few indeed are meet
Is but a notion nowadays
Deservedly effete,
And in the reading you'll concur—
Poeta fit, non nascitur !

TO A SIGN-PAINTER.

O WORTHY artist! in my chair
I sat, and watched you working there,
A humble slave of art;
Upon the board which bears the sign
I saw you painting, line by line,
In hues astonishingly fine,
That marvellous White Hart.

How gleaming white the creature shone,
How green the grass he stood upon,
When all was quite complete!

Observe the posture of the head,
The eye (a lurid spot of red),
The strange extremities, instead
Of ordinary feet!

You vanished at your labour's close,
Since other landlords, I suppose,
For your assistance ask;
A Ship—a military scene—
A Lion red—a Dragon green—
The Sun and Moon with stars between,—
What is your present task?

What though perspective you ignore?
What though the paints you keep in store
Are bad as bad can be?

Impressionists would doubtless glance
Upon your masterpiece askance;
But yet their scorn is not, perchance,
From envy wholly free.

An artist in a humble sphere,
Of carping cliques you have no fear,
No dread of critic's tongue.
Contented with the rustics' praise,
No base committee of R.A.'s
Avails to rob you of your bays—
Your works are always hung!

No thought of unavailing quest
For purchasers disturbs your rest,
No fear of payment late;

Your work is scarcely finished when
You take the money, there and then—
A system which more famous men
Would gladly imitate !

HOW IT STRIKES THE "CONTEMPORARY."

["Why should not women take the B.A. degree? . . . Unfortunately the older Universities have resented every attempt at breaking down their cherished exclusiveness."
—*From an article in the "Contemporary Review."*]

DESPOTIC dons' dominion
Still subjugates us all;
They scoff at our opinion,
Our purposes miscall:

Will no deliverer appear?
And is it vainly, as we fear,
We hold our meetings every year
Within St. James's Hall?

Our wrongs, if brought to knowledge,
Would surely move your hearts;
Degreeless from her college
The wrangler-ess departs:
And shall not too the maids, who can
Give all the usages of ἀν
As well as any living man,
Be Bachelors of Arts?

Persuasive or abusive,
We fail our point to gain,
Disgracefully exclusive
These ancient seats remain:

But yet a future we foresee
When women will the rulers be,
And men will beg a pass-degree,
Will beg, and beg in vain!

* * * *

P.S.—The pith of our petition
Is seldom understood;
It is not all ambition,
Though this, no doubt, is good;
But, speaking frankly, we declare
The point for which we really care
Is just to gain the right to wear
That *most* becoming hood!

A BALLADE OF THE POCKET-HANDKERCHIEF.

["A regulation handkerchief is to be issued to the army, on which are printed various practical instructions."—*A Daily Paper.*]

FULL often in history's page
We read the achievements of those
Who marched, in an ignorant age,
With a banner, to conquer their foes.
A better provision we chose,
Which is now to our army supplied;
No standard our regiment knows,—
We fight by our handkerchief's side!

While others, their battles to wage,
Still read up voluminous prose,
And think that philosophers sage
Can teach them the way to oppose
All volumes of tactics we close;
How armies are quickest defied
The print on our handkerchief shows—
We fight by our handkerchief's side!

To-day, when we mean to engage,
No pennon behind us there flows;
Such things are but fit for the stage—
Nay, into the pocket it goes!
And yet in our bosom there glows
A keen and legitimate pride;
We think, in the fiercest of throes,
We fight by our handkerchief's side!

ENVOY.

Prince! Seeing us blowing our nose,
Should hasty opponents deride,
They'll learn why, on knowing our blows,
We fight by our handkerchief's side!

TO AN OPTIMIST.

I FEEL, Amanda, much surprise
That you have yet escaped disaster,
Although you openly despise
The teaching of each sapient master;
You do not take a mournful theme,
And always talk in accents tearful—
Nay, far from this, you often seem,
Audacious maid! distinctly cheerful.

Upon each book, if only graced
With striking plot and situation,
You look with possibly misplaced
But quite unstinted admiration;
You do not share as yet, I know,
Our modern critics' sad conviction,
Who write long articles to show
The swift decline of modern fiction.

You do not cultivate a cause
Much advertised in largest letters,
Nor seek for popular applause
By talking of your sex's "fetters";
They charm you not, those fierce delights
So dear to all our lady-fighters:
You care, I think, for women's rights
As little as for women writers.

Although it seems extremely bold,
You say, without the least misgiving,
That, spite of what the sages hold,
Existence still is worth the living;
Nor will you readily obey
Those mournful philosophic wishes
Which urge mankind, without delay,
To turn themselves to food for fishes.

No doubt such antiquated views
Deserve our most sincere compassion
Since obstinately you refuse
To heed the latest mental fashion;
And errors grave and sinister
In such opinions I'd discover,
Were I some wise philosopher,
Not merely—your devoted lover!

AD INCOGNITAM.

O MAIDEN!—I cannot address you,
I fear, by a definite name—
Can troubles of authors distress you,
Those eager pursuers of fame?
The cuttings you send us are able
Our minds to depress or elate;
You wield, like the Parcæ of fable,
The scissors of fate!

As one who not otherwise knows you,
But studies the slips you prepare,
Is it wrong on my part to suppose you
Are young, sympathetic, and fair?
Yet paragraphs vicious and biting,
Reviews that are pleasant and bland,
Are all, if we judge by the writing,
Sent out by your hand.

Perhaps when the *Puddleton Neighbour*
Heaps praise on my exquisite style,
You pause, in the midst of your labour,
To read it again with a smile;
When the *Snake*, in its usual fashion,
Exhibits most villainous taste,
Do tears of the sweetest compassion
Make liquid the paste?

When critics abuse without measure
My tragedy, recently born,
You read, I believe it with pleasure,
Their words with well-merited scorn.
And yet, to make candid confession,
I paid up your agency's fees
By no means to get a succession
Of libels like these.

Then, if you would really befriend me,
This boon for the future bestow—
The flattering notices send me,
The others I'll gladly forgo;
Thus prove, I entreat, your affection—
Choose out the reviews that are best,
Then forward this pleasant selection,
And burn all the rest.

THE MODERN MERCURY.

BEHOLD that urchin, occupied
In counting with an honest pride
The marbles he has won!
O tardy messenger of fate!
Without distinction, small and great,
Their telegrams, perforce, await
Until your game be done.

Perchance a philosophic strain
Makes you regard as wholly vain
Our human bliss and woes;

What matters whether State affairs,
Or news of good, or weighty cares,
Or tidings relative to shares,
Within your bag repose?

Well, not by me will you be blamed;
I like to see you not ashamed
To dawdle for a while;
You furnish, by example sage,
A moral for our busy age;
And so, though others fume and rage,
I watch you with a smile.

He moves at length, and now we'll see
Which way—— This telegram for me?
Oh, worst of human crimes

Is such delay!—it's monstrous quite!
I'll forward a complaint to-night!
Here, pen and paper—let me write
A letter to the *Times*!

A BUSINESS LETTER.

DEAR FRED,—Your favour of the 3rd,
Has had my very best attention;
But yet I cannot, in a word,
Accept you on the terms you mention:
Indeed, wherever you may try,
According to the last advices,
You'll meet, I fear, the same reply—
"It can't be done, at current prices!"

In vain an ancient name you show,
In vain for intellect are noted;
Blue blood and brains, you surely know,
At nominal amounts are quoted;
And then, I see, you're weak enough
To offer "love, sincere, unstudied,"—
Why, sir, with such Quixotic stuff
The market's absolutely flooded!

But—every day this fact confirms—
The time is over for romances,
And whether we can come to terms
Depends alone on your finances.
So, would you think me over-bold
If I, with deference, requested
A statement of what funds you hold,
In what securities invested?

For, candidly, in such affairs
A speedy bid your only chance is,
A boom in Yankee millionaires
May soon result in marked advances;
With you I'd willingly be wed,
To like you well enough I'm able,
But first submit your bank-book, Fred,
To your (perhaps) devoted Mabel!

AN EARNEST APPEAL.

["The art of conversation is almost extinct."—*Spectator.*]

O CRITIC austere! you have hit on, we fear,
a grievous, nay, criminal failing,
And nothing is worse than the way we converse
in accord with the fashion prevailing;
No bright *jeux d'esprit*, no keen repartee, we
utter when gathered together,
But shamelessly dare our notes to compare on
the dresses, the crops, and the weather.

Though nothing, we own, can completely atone
for the faults which you scornfully mention,
The subject, as yet, has undoubtedly met with
quite insufficient attention;
And though we admit our endeavour at wit is,
at best, an unworthy production,
Yet what could we do, with no teacher like you
to give us your welcome instruction?

Too often it seems that from commonplace themes
to depart your male talker afraid is;
Yet worse, you assert, are the forward and pert
(a hint, we suppose, for the ladies).
Then teach us, we pray, what *are* we to say?—
the facts of our life to relate, or
Those stories commence about pussy-cat's sense,
which we crib from the current *Spectator*?

No doubt, in the time of the future sublime by
the side of the Novelists' College,
A school there will be, to impart (for a fee) a
due conversational knowledge;
The books of the year will be summarised here,
with tips on collateral topics,
And the Baedeker class will suffice you to pass
as a traveller fresh from the tropics.

But as such a scheme is at present a dream,
while the need for improvement is pressing,
The person who prints a few practical hints will
gain a well-merited blessing;
For, till you shall teach the right manner of
speech, our terror in talking immense is,
And all will become almost totally dumb to
guard against further offences!

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

MY Angelina once enjoyed
The mild lawn-tennis all the day,
And did not scorn to be employed
In croquet's unexciting fray;
O truly happy seasons! when
I think of you, I wish you back;
For Angelina had not then
Become a golfing maniac.

But now of none of these she thinks,
All such pursuits she reckons "slow,"
And spends the days upon the links,
Where nevermore I mean to go;
For I recall the heartless snubs,
Which those enchanting lips let fall
When I demolished several clubs,
And lost my temper, and the ball.

To-day the fickle maid prefers
With young Macduff to pass her time,
Because his "putting," she avers,—
Whatever that be,—"is sublime";
And when I get a chance to state
The deep affection felt by me,
She interrupts me to relate
How well she did that hole in three.

I love my Angelina still ;
 Yet he who chose her as a wife
Would be expected to fulfil
 A caddie's duties all his life ;
So, if I turn away instead,
 You will not hold me much to blame ;
How *can* I woo her ? She is wed
 Already—to this awful game !

JUDICIAL WISDOM.

[" He censures the aristocratic exclusiveness of the ancient haunts of learning."—*The "Times," on a Judge's address on Education.*]

IN dust and ashes Cambridge sits, with conscious blushes burning,
No more her fame and history dejected Oxford vaunts:
A learned judge condemns them both, judicially discerning
Their culpable exclusiveness, as "venerable haunts."

They both, he grieves to notice, fail to welcome the intrusion
Of those who seek instruction on the best commercial plan;
They still appear to share in that remarkable delusion
That "manners," even more than mathematics, "makyth man."

And shall despotic rulers of each "ancient haunt" (or college)—
We greatly thank thee, learned judge, for teaching us that word!—
Ignore the ample smattering of ill-digested knowledge
Which the middle classes boast of, in this manner most absurd?

For this, then, do we utilise our infinite resources,
For this "Extension lecturers" their varied subjects treat—
Who teach the whole of chemistry in seven brief discourses,
And throw you in geology in lecture eight, complete—?

For this, indeed, does Paddington despatch the full excursion
Of men and women students up to Oxford each July,
And can the dons be unimpressed by this polite diversion
Of playing at belonging to a University?

Well, let us show the judge's words emblazoned on our banner,
And both these "venerable haunts" we shortly hope to see
Conducted in another, and a socialistic, manner
When every woman, man, and child shall take a high degree!

THE VERY YOUNG IDEA.

["The Convocation of the University of Oxford has recently passed a decree authorising an examination of persons, not members of the University, under fourteen years of age."]

COME, let us hymn our gratitude
To those ingenious sages
Who unremittingly pursued
This scheme in all its stages,
With pure benevolence imbued
For those of tender ages!

Already Oxford grows apace
Through that superb invention
Which fosters true æsthetic grace;
For rustics proudly mention
In each obscure, uncultured place
The magic word "Extension.'

But nobler things her rulers dare,
To high ideals pressing:
Each studious child will soon declare
His pleasure at possessing,
Before he reach fourteen, his share
Of academic blessing.

A wise professor will be set
To train his young ambition;

And, that his earliest needs be met,
A don of high position
Will lecture on the alphabet,
And simplify addition.

So let us hail the scheme with joy,
Nor stop to question whether
Thereby the dons who lack employ
Intend their nests to feather.
O happy girl! O happy boy!
You'll all be prigs together!

PARNASSUS, LIMITED.

WE beg you to give your attention,
And also your help, if you can,
To a project which is, we may mention,
On a highly original plan.
By syndicates we are surrounded,
For purposes better or worse;
But this is the only one founded
For turning out verse.

To please both the rich and the thrifty
At suitable fees we'll engage;
Mr. Traill will select for us fifty
Most competent bards of the age;
Our orders will thus be effected
At an almost incredible rate,
And verse of the kind you've selected
Be made while you wait.

We shall furnish, at moderate prices,
The elegy, sonnet, and lay,
While shunning the metrical vices
That cling to the work of the day;
The poets now chiefly in season
Are often less clear than sublime,
But here you may reckon on reason
United with rhyme.

The bard, who at present is burning
For fame in a village or slum,
Will thus, by our system, be earning
A highly respectable sum;
The epic or tragedy writer
Will make a fair income, we hope,
By turning out stanzas far lighter
In praise of a soap.

The drift of our present suggestion
By now you will readily guess;
The project will be, beyond question,
A speedy financial success;
And so, with this brief explanation
Concerning our system's affairs,
We count on your prompt application
For numerous shares.

A FALLEN ART.

["A 'lady palmist' has been fined ten shillings and costs for fortune-telling."—*Daily News.*]

SHE lived, this prophetess, too late,
And plied an art that's out of date;
Another age had seen her gain
Her reputation not in vain,
Had seen a crowd respectful wait
Upon the arbiter of fate,
While kings and rulers brought her gold
To have futurity unrolled!

In some Greek court where fountains play,
Or dwelling by the Appian Way,
The prophetess would surely be
Besought by each Leuconoë;
And if for these she sometimes drew
A future pleasanter than true,
At least she gave them, you'll confess,
Anticipated happiness!

Ah! times are changed, and nowadays
Such divination hardly pays;
There come no more the crowds that used,
The fees are terribly reduced!
And if our policemen caught the sphinx
Propounding "missing words," one thinks
Our British justice could not fail
To send her speedily to jail!

"APPARENT FAILURE."

["The Private View was not a success. . . . The dresses which we noticed were very ordinary indeed."—*Art Notes in a Ladies' Paper.*]

"NOT a success"—for every toilet there
Was commonplace and stupid, more or less;
A fact which clearly made the whole affair
"Not a success."

"Were not the pictures good?" Well, we
confess
We know not, neither do we greatly care;
As writers for the fashionable press
Artistic knowledge falls not to our share;
We saw no novelties in hat or dress;
Wherefore the show is plainly, we declare,
"Not a success."

THE ANTI—— ?

YOUR aid let me ask in a difficult task,
Mr. Punch, with the greatest submission ;
To win for my name a well-merited fame was
always my ardent ambition,
And clearly to-day the least difficult way is to
send an appeal to the papers,
To form an intrigue for creating a league
against fashion-designers and drapers.

Thereby shall I reap an advertisement cheap,
and writers, with much perseverance,
Will furnish as news their apocryphal views
on my appetite, age, and appearance ;
They all will revere my conviction sincere,
and loudly re-echo my praises,
But the thing which, as yet, I'm unable to get,
is a novel departure in crazes.

The idea shall we float that a swallow-tail coat
is only adapted for Vandals ?
Write pamphlets, designed to enlighten man-
kind on the duty of taking to sandals ?
Would a hatred of hats, or crusade on cravats,
secure us a sympathy louder ?
Or shall we assert it is time to revert to patches,
knee-breeches, and powder ?

Meanwhile, your applause we invite for our
Cause—you notice the capital letter—
Subscriptions and fees you may send when you
please to the writer—the sooner the better.
But as to the theme of this notable scheme,
I wait for a timely suggestion;
Its worth's beyond doubt, but what it's about
remains, for the present, a question!

A LOVE-LETTER.

(FROM A RADICAL CANDIDATE.)

DEAREST AMANDA,—Now the time is here
A new constituency for me to woo,
Urged by a life's devotion, I appear
A fond and hopeful candidate for you;
A seat within your heart is my ambition,—
Hear my address, put forth with all submission.

By Woman's Suffrage, if you'll be my wife,
My whole existence will henceforth be lighted,
Home Rule shall be a feature of our life
When you and I are happily united,
And I need hardly mention my aversion
To anything approaching to coercion.

Then every week, when we are wedded, dear,
But as a fleeting Eight Hours Day will look;
Payment of Members of *our* house, I fear,
Will be supported warmly by the cook,
Though on such points we'll favour the adoption
Of any quantity of Local Option.

From bribery and treating I've abstained,
Nor sought to win you under false pretences,

No bills for dress or jewels are contained
Within the term "legitimate expenses";
You will reward, I hope, my deep affection,
By granting me an unopposed election?

AD PUELLAM.

YOU used to talk of plates and prints
And "quick developers" before,
In spite of not unfrequent hints
That these in time become a bore;
But then this photographic craze
Seemed little but a foolish fad,
While now its very latest phase
Appears to me distinctly bad.

Since even your devoted friends
At sight of you were wont to fly,
You manage still to gain your ends,
And photograph them on the sly;
The muff, the cloak with ample folds,
The parcel, and the biscuit-tin,
I know that each discreetly holds
Detective lenses hid within.

Should Crœsus greet you with a smile,
A "bromide" will record the fact;
Should Strephon help you o'er a stile,
The film will take him in the act.
Yet this renown, if truth be said,
Is fame they'd rather be without;
Nor, I assure you, will they wed
A lady photographic tout!

A REAL BARGAIN.

["For sale. A mummy in a painted wooden coffin; a splendid specimen; cost recently £33. Price £20."—*Advertisement in the "Academy."*]

FOR twenty pounds!—a price, you know,
That really is absurdly low;
In fine condition, head to feet;
Here is a chance you will not beat—
A mummy wholly *comme il faut.*

Your minds will surely be aglow,
The trifling outlay to bestow;
A painted coffin, too, complete
For twenty pounds!

O Being of the long ago!
Did your astrologers foreshow
The strange adventures you would meet?
A prince, perhaps,—we always treat
Ignotum pro magnifico,—
For twenty pounds!

THE FEMININE SCHOOL OF FICTION.

HERE is a scheme of undoubted utility,
Which with unanimous praise we should greet;
Ladies will turn, with the greatest facility,
Feminine novelists furnished complete!

Damsels of fashion feel no hesitation in
Learning by practice to bake and to fry;
Let them receive a complete education in
Making a novel as well as a pie.

They will be taught whether notices flattering
Can by appeals to the critics be got;
How, too, a knowledge of tongues, though a smattering,
Serves to provide an "original" plot.

Methods for heroes to gain the enjoyment of
Riches and fame will be studied in full;
Lecturers teach the judicious employment of
Runaway steeds and the furious bull.

How to describe with minuteness the scenery,
Though you have never set eyes on the spot;
Whether, when villains pay punishment plenary,
They should be finished by poison or shot;

How the detective will cleverly hit upon
Pieces of evidence nobody saw;
How, too, Her Majesty's judges will sit upon
Cases (in novels) regardless of law;—

This, and more also, each maid of ability
Quickly will learn, by this excellent plan;
And let the editors look with tranquillity
Into a future like this—if they can!

AN ARTISTIC IDEAL.

[A commissioner of health condemns the Venus de Medicis as the figure of "a miserable mistress of the house, and a contemptible mother."—*Daily News.*]

HOW strange it seems, the length of time
We loudly praised and marvelled at you,
And spoke about you as sublime,
O grossly overrated statue!
We thought you beautiful of old,
Until we learnt with consternation
The low position which you hold
In scientific estimation.

He comes, the Health Commissioner,
To regulate artistic crazes,
To teach us what we should prefer,
From what we must withhold our praises;
As forth his weighty sentence went
We looked askance at one another;
We had not thought that you were meant
As "mistress of a house," or "mother."

Well, we grew wiser by-and-by,
And saw how vain are your pretensions,
Who wholly fail to satisfy
The Health Commissioner's dimensions;
No, you must imitate, to claim
Applause from each artistic patron,
The subtle grace, the classic frame
Peculiar to the British matron!

THE WOMEN'S CONGRESS AT CHICAGO.

["Besides all these, subjects connected with education and industry, literature and art, philanthropy and charity, moral and social reform, religion, civil law and government, science and philosophy, were discussed. The Congress lasted a week."—*From a Weekly Paper.*]

IN mute astonishment we bend,
With all our male inferior race,
Before the ladies who attend
In great Chicago—wondrous place!
Who scoffed before are now become
Discreetly still, profoundly dumb.

They met—oh, marvel of our time!—
From every land they gathered there;
The lady from Australia's clime
Hobnobbed with dames from Belgrave Square
Within one building sat compressed
The wisdom of the East and West.

Seven days they met, and then dispersed,
With nothing further to be done;
For every question, last and first,
They'd wholly settled, one by one;
In comprehensive view they saw
Philosophy and Civil Law.

They spoke of Schools, of Charity,
And Science found its proper part;
Religion and Philanthropy
Were joined with Literature and Art.

No theme too great, and none too small;
They simply finished one and all.

O politicians most effete,
 Who so unceasingly debate!
These ladies in a week could treat
 The past and future of the State;
Philosophers, who truth pursue!
A week sufficed to deal with *you*.

So, acting on this noble plan,
 Henceforth be government resigned,
To sway and alter as she can
 To fair, omniscient womankind;
On every point prepared to speak
And pass her judgment—in a week!

THE RHYME OF THE INCOMPETENT GOLFER.

SOME love their Driver well, I know,
And say this club surpasses all;
I take the thing, my swing is slow,
My eyes are fixed upon the ball,
I carry all the precepts out—
The ball stays, smiling, on the tee!
Nay, it is plain, beyond a doubt,
The Driver's not the club for me.

The Brassie one with love regards
 According to the books; but then,
Although the ball will go five yards,
 The Brassie-head will travel ten;
Since, therefore, half a dozen rounds
 Will make "repairs" a heavy fee,
If only on financial grounds
 The Brassie's not the club for me!

Although my caddie shows surprise,
 An Iron for my drive I beg;
The ball soars nobly to the skies,
 But, sad to say, towards square-leg;
The value of the vaunted Cleek
 Myself I never yet could see,
I'm certain, candidly to speak,
 That these are *not* the clubs for me.

Nay, bring to me the best of all,
From out the bag the Niblick take;
Not seldom it will hit the ball,
But rarely will it bend or break;
Imagine the spectators' joy,
And picture my opponent's glee!
Henceforth one club will I employ—
The Niblick is the club for me!

THE PASSING OF THE PETTICOAT.

"The 'petticoat element' in fiction is, apparently, to become extinct."—*A Morning Paper.*]

ITS doom is sealed: the critic states,
With sorrowful conviction,
The ruthless sentence of the Fates,
The banishment which now awaits
The feminine in fiction.

And must the haughty duchess go,
Despite our admiration?
And she who made our bosoms glow,
Her fascinating daughter, so
Addicted to flirtation?

Henceforward shall we never meet
That lady of romances,
Whose conversation is replete
With Spanish gained in Wardour Street,
And French which not of France is?

No longer will our novels hold
Minute account of dresses,
Nor shall we worship, as of old,
The damsel's hair of "rippling gold,
Or else her "sable tresses."

Our tales, from petticoats set free,
Though scarcely so seductive,
Will, all philosophers agree,
Through future generations be
Exceedingly instructive.

And though, of course, this system new,
Most fervently we treasure,
Yet, heroines, we cannot view
The certainty of losing you
With undiluted pleasure!

OUT OF DATE

NO novel strains can I invent
To sing my lady's praises,
But humbly follow precedent
In metaphors and phrases;
And yet those ancient similes
Which chiefly I remember
Scarce seem designed, to modern mind,
For London in December!

Your poet sings of "Phœbus bright,"
And others duly follows
In stating that "Affection's light
Is clearer than Apollo's."
But still this ancient compliment
To-day seems hardly proper;
Its flame might well, I think, excell
A disc of dirty copper!

To add, "While stars shine in the sky,
My love you need not question,"
Does not appear a notably
Felicitous suggestion.
The stars remain, if we believe
Our astronomic sages;
But still, you know, through fog and snow,
They've not been seen for ages!

YES OR NO?

OH, never did lover in fable
In such a predicament stand!
A letter I wrote to my Mabel,
To ask for her heart and her hand,
With compliments worded so nicely,
A lifelong devotion I swore;
She's answered—and left me precisely
As wise as before!

It is true that I begged, when inditing
My note, a reply with all speed;
And Mabel, to judge from the writing,
Fulfilled my petition indeed!
The drift of this scrawl, so erratic,
I am wholly unable to guess—
It may be refusal emphatic,
Or can it be "Yes"?

"Affection" she'll feel for me "ever";
But stay—if that blot is an "*n*"
It turns it at once into "never,"
Or is it a slip of the pen?
Her heart will a "truant (or true?) be,"
And what is the word just above?
It looks like—it cannot be—"booby"!
Or stay,—is it "love"?

A meeting must needs be awaited
To render these mysteries plain;
Perhaps in this letter she's stated
She never will see me again;
On one thing at least I've decided;—
Should she be my partner for life,
A type-writer shall be provided
Along with a wife!

THE RIGHTS OF WRITERS.

["Authors never strike. Perhaps it would be no bad thing for literature if they did."—MR. LANG, *in the "Illustrated London News."*]

LET us follow, brother writers, this most notable suggestion;
Co-operated authors, kindly gather in your strength!
No more shall we be troubled with the fees and profit question,
Mr. Lang has kindly found for us deliverance at length.

No more shall we relate within the *Author's*
placid pages
How dealing with the publishers the youth-
ful poet damps,
How base and brutal editors neglect MS. for
ages,
And supplement their incomes by retaining
penny stamps.

No more shall careless journalists and cynical
reviewers
Dismiss three dozen novels in a column as
they like,
For scarce will they escape from their irascible
pursuers
When we, indignant authors, go, in every
sense, on strike.

We shall gather in Trafalgar Square, and listen
there to samples
Of injuries which novelists and poets bear
to-day;
We shall carry, in accordance with the very
best examples,
Resolutions which insist on shorter work and
higher pay.

Then, waxing even bolder, we will sternly seek
admittance
To offices where editors and managers
attend,
And make them humbly promise to increase
the scanty pittance
Which they rarely pay at present, and to
publish all we send.

So let us therefore carry into instant execution
The plan which Mr. Lang for us has generously made;
Our troubles thus will doubtless find their ultimate solution,
When every one gets into print, and every one is paid!

THE POET'S LOVE.

MY lady's name I cannot state;
At different times I greet her
As Chloe, Amaryllis, Kate,
According to the metre;
I've called her Mabel many a time,—
A name which lends itself to rhyme.

My lady's hair is sometimes black
To match her sable dresses,
At others falls about her back
In glorious auburn tresses;

Yet do not take me to imply
She's given to the use of dye.

I like her when she's sweet and small
The daintiest of flowers;
I love her when, divinely tall,
Above the rest she towers;
And yet, as second thoughts suggest,
Perhaps a golden mean were best.

Sometimes, a simple rustic maid,
She strays through meadows green;
Sometimes her beauty is displayed
In glittering ball-room scene;
More recently I've thought upon
Creating her a lady don.

This peerless girl of whom I speak
 I ever worship blindly,
And sing her praises once a week,
 If editors are kindly;
Alas! this paragon, I own,
Exists within my verse alone.

A NOVEL SHOW.

["A popular place of entertainment is arranging a Burglars' Exhibition."—*Daily Telegraph.*]

OH, gladly will the public pay
Its shillings for admission,
To study in a careful way
This most original display,
The Burglars' Exhibition!

Professor Sikes will here explain,
With practical instruction,
How best to break a window-pane,
Through which his classic form may gain
Judicious introduction.

The jemmies, and revolvers too,
Will doubtless prove enthralling;
And all the implements we'll view
With which these scientists pursue
Their fascinating calling:

The most efficient type of gag
To silence all intrusion,
The latest kind of carpet-bag
Wherein to bear the bulky "swag"
To some remote seclusion.

Then, by this exhibition's aid,
The art will spread to others,
And those who ply this busy trade
Will, in a year or two, be made
A noble band of brothers.

The thief of olden time we'll see
As seldom as the dodo;
The burglar's future aim will be
To join the *fortiter in re*
And *suaviter in modo!*

BALLADE OF RURAL BLISS.

YOU ask me, Damon, why I praise
The country life with eager zest,
And why your humble servant stays
In spots of scanty interest.
Well, I will answer your request:
Chiefly because I need not fear
The squalling newsboy I detest;
There are no evening papers here!

When Phœbus sheds his parting rays
And sinks beneath the crimson west,
No longer, as in other days,
I'm maddened by that hateful pest—
"Last Speshal! Anarchist confessed!
"The litest! Haccident severe!"
O rustic village, truly blest!
There are no evening papers here.

And I, who seemed in many ways
Perhaps a too fastidious guest,
Stern critic of the mayonnaise,
By common humour unimpressed,
Now laugh at each bucolic jest
And gaily swig the good brown beer
Because no troubles can molest—
There are no evening papers here!

ENVOY.

Prince, manifold delights invest
The country life and make it dear;
But this is, after all, the best—
There are no evening papers here!

CATS AND DOGS.

TEN cats and dogs are mine to keep:
This is the harvest which I reap
From friends upon my natal day,
And I'm expected to display
A gratitude sincere and deep!

The dogs upon my china leap,
The cats within the pantry creep,—
A pretty sum they'll make me pay,
Ten cats and dogs!

They spoil my work, they break my sleep;
How can I make a wholesale sweep?
I cannot give the brutes away:
What would the several donors say?
Perhaps *you'll* buy (extremely cheap)
Ten cats and dogs?

UN PAS SEUL.

YOU ask me why, with bitter woe
Depicted on each feature
I roam the ball-room to and fro
A melancholy creature,
And why examine with such care
Each sofa, balcony, and chair?

It's not, as you politely hint,
A matrimonial crisis,
Nor that myself I did not stint
In claret-cup and ices;

'Tis merely that my programme's lost,
And must be found at any cost!

Thereon, besides engagements made,
I indiscreetly jotted
A few descriptions, by whose aid
My partners might be spotted;
And surely I am not to blame
Because I can't recall a name!

"Five—waltz—blue dress and curly nose,"
"Ten—ugly, red hair—Lancers,"
"Eight—polka—short and freckled";—those
To whom each picture answers
Would doubtless think themselves maligned
If they this card should chance to find!

And that is why, with bitter woe
Depicted on each feature,
I roam the ball-room to and fro
A melancholy creature;
And that, my friend, is also why
A timely prudence bids me fly!

AD EXAMINATOREM.

(BY AN ENRAGED UNDERGRADUATE.)

LOOK here, I have stood a good deal
From other tormentors and you,
But now I decidedly feel
That a vigorous protest is due;
Such feats as your latest success
Are not to be tamely endured,
And if ever we meet in the college or street
I'll hope, for your sake, you're insured!

You've ploughed me again and again,
In papers of intricate kind—
A fact, to be perfectly plain,
Which did not much trouble my mind;
For, having impressed them at home
With the standard examiners ask,
I had led them to see that to gain a degree
Is an almost impossible task.

But you, and the rest of your kind
Conferred in the Senate, and then
A vile resolution designed
That women be placed with the men!
And what is the consequence, please,
Which thus you've absurdly allowed?
My sister, alas! has obtained a first class,
While I, sir, am utterly ploughed!—

That sister whom, up to this day,
I always despised as a "crock"!
Oh, what will my relatives say,
And how my acquaintance will mock!
Meanwhile, Sir, I send you a hint
That I owe you a certain amount,
And I eagerly wait for a suitable date
To settle our little account!

NEW BARDS AND OLD.

THE poet in the ancient days,
Or so at least we're told,
Regarded neither blame nor praise,
And looked with scorn on gold;
The man—how foolish!—lived for art
And cared for nought beside,
And lastly, with a broken heart,
Artistically died.

But modern bards, it's understood,
Are very different men:
They dine, they form a Brotherhood,
They quarrel with the pen;
And if a publisher should pay
Too little for their rhymes,
They write in wrath without delay
Epistles to the *Times*.

The bard of old, we gather, sought
For inspiration long,
And waited till some noble thought
Should rouse him into song;
Our more astute practitioner
Will deal with all events,
And write in praise, as you prefer,
Of love or Three-per-Cents.

Well, let us all our joy express
That, in these cultured days,
The poet strives for some success
More lucrative than bays;
This fact with pride we look upon,—
However Art declines,
Parnassus now is managed on
The soundest business lines.

A HINT.

YOU read my verse; the praises you bestow
Can make innocuous the critic's curse,
Vain his attack, unfelt his shrewdest blow:
You read my verse.

You praise the rhymes; like not their writer worse
If just one hint he cannot well forgo;
The bard, to put it in a manner terse,
Does not exist on praise alone, you know,
And sympathy can hardly fill his purse;—
You borrow, and you do not *buy*, although
You read my verse!

"TO BE CONTINUED."

HOW eagerly those tales I read,
While still of tender years,
Of murder strange, of haunted grange,
And gory buccaneers!
But, at the most exciting point,
Abruptly ceased the text,—
What wrath was mine to meet the line,
"*Continued in our next*"!

Sometimes, indeed, misfortune sharp
The journal would attend—
The funds would fail, and so the tale
Remain without an end.
Now, when I take a serial up,
I cry, in accents vexed,—
"I've read enough—why *is* the stuff
'*Continued in our next*'?"

Ah, well, the things we valued once
Enliven us no more!
(Remarks like these, if morals please,
I'll furnish by the score.)
And should these verses but result
In making you perplexed,
You'll learn with glee *they* will not be
"*Continued in our next*"!

FINIS.

THOUGH, Mabel, scarce an hour is past
Since first you opened that romance,
Already now to "Part the Last"
You turn a surreptitious glance.
Why, surely soon enough you'll learn
The fate of each fictitious friend;
You've scarcely done with Chapter One
Before you want "to know the end."

The heroine's stupendous feats,
The hero's indignation fine,
At which the wicked duke retreats
Quite routed all along the line,
The noble deeds, the stirring scenes,
To none of these will you attend
Till certain quite that all comes right,
That marriage-bells are at the end.

Well, if the bard might moralise,
He would remark, I think, that man,
Throughout existence, ever tries
To imitate your simple plan;
In guessing what is still to come
Long days with scant result we spend:
We too would look throughout the book,
We too would like to know the end.

And yet, I venture to maintain,
To read your stories through were best,
A course whereby their plots would gain
No inconsiderable zest;
So, Mabel, in the tale of life,
Whatever lot the Fates may send,
Fulfil each day as best you may,
Nor strive too soon to know the end!

Hazell Watson, & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury.

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